

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 055040
ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 SIG-03 INRE-00 INR-10
EB-08 SS-15 NSCE-00 /064 R

DRAFTED BY PM/ISO: JEBURGESS:ML
APPROVED BY PM/ISO - GTCHURCHILL
OSD/ISA - S.CHARLES
DIA - COL. R.A.WOLFF
AF/C - R. GRIFFIN
-----107658 032029Z /46

O R 031944Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USDAO KINSHASA
DMA HQ WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 055040

PARIS FOR AMBASSADOR TIENKEN; DMA HQ ATTN: PPI

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, GB, US

SUBJECT: DOWNED HELICOPTER

REF: LIBREVILLE 519 (DTG 281737Z FEB 78 (NOTAL)

1. REFTEL AND PREVIOUS CONCERN USG ASSISTANCE IN SEARCH FOR
MISSING GABONESE HELICOPTER WHOSE PASSENGERS INCLUDED THREE
RELATIVES OF PRESIDENT BONGO. REFTEL REPORTED GABONESE
REQUEST FOR INFO ON US CAPABILITIES IN JUNGLE DEFOLIATION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 055040

AND RADAR PHOTO MAPPING OF DOWNED HELICOPTER SEARCH AREA,
AND GABONESE PROPOSAL TO DEFOLIATE SOME 400 SQUARE KILOMET-
ERS OF JUNGLE IN PRIMARY SEARCH ZONE. INFO ON US DEFOLIANT
AVAILABILITY, TOXICITY AND EFFECTIVENESS WAS ALSO REQUESTED,
AS WAS US ASSISTANCE IN MAPPING PRIMARY SEARCH ZONE. EMB-
ASSY MAY DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST FROM
THE PRESIDENCY.

2. THE US NO LONGER MAINTAINS A DEPLOYABLE MILITARY DEFOLIATION CAPABILITY; WE THEREFORE WOULD BE UNABLE TO PERFORM THE INTENDED DEFOLIATION.

3. USG EXPERIENCE WITH DEFOLIANTS INDICATES THAT COMMERCIAL AVAILABILITY OF SUCH CHEMICALS AS TORDON, PICRAM, 24D OR 245T

SHOULD NOT POSE A MAJOR PROBLEM. THE COMMERCIAL AVAILABILITY OF SUFFICIENT SPECIALLY EQUIPPED AIRCRAFT, PLUS LOGISTICS, MIGHT BE VERY DIFFICULT, AND WOULD BE EXTREMELY COSTLY TO GOG. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE PRIMARY SEARCH AREA IN QUESTION IS COVERED WITH A TRIPLE CANOPY OF VEGETATION. TO REMOVE EACH CANOPY OVER SOME 400 SQ. KM TO A DEGREE SUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE SEARCH VISIBILITY WOULD TAKE UPWARD OF 660 SPRAY EQUIPPED C-123 EQUIVALENT SORTIES FLOWN OVER A PERIOD OF 10 DAYS BY SEVEN AIRCRAFT. (APPROX 10 DAYS ARE REQUIRED FOR EACH MAJOR LAYER OF FOLIAGE TO FALL). AT LEAST 200,000 GALLONS OF THE AFOREMENTIONED HERBICIDES, AT 10 - 12 DOLLARS PER GALLON, AS WELL AS APPROPRIATE STORAGE, MIXING AND PUMPING EQUIPMENT WOULD BE REQUIRED. NORMAL AIRCRAFT SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS WOULD ALSO ARISE, AS WOULD TRANSPORTATION AND MANPOWER COSTS. WITH PROPER APPLICATION NO TOXIC EFFECTS ON SEARCHERS WOULD BE EXPECTED ONCE CANOPIES HAVE BEEN REMOVED. EFFECTS ON PERSONNEL ON THE GROUND DURING SPRAYING WOULD HAVE TO BE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 055040

CONSIDERED IN CONTEXT OF CHEMICALS AND TECHNIQUES SELECTED.

4. WE WOULD ALSO BE UNABLE TO PROVIDE USG ASSETS FOR PHOTO RADAR MAPPING OF SEARCH AREA DUE TO DISTANCES AND PREVIOUS COMMITMENTS OF LIMITED RESOURCES. THE DEFENSE MAPPING AGENCY IS WILLING, HOWEVER, TO POUCH FULL SET OF BEST AVAILABLE MAPS TO LIBREVILLE UPON RECEIPT OF PRECISE COORDINATES OF DESIRED SEARCH AREA, IF SUCH MAPS ARE AVAILABLE.

5. WE ARE PREPARED TO FACILITATE GABONESE EMBASSY WASHINGTON CONTACT WITH COMMERCIAL CHEMICAL DEFOLIATION AND AERIAL SURVEY FIRMS IF GOG SO DESIRES. REQUEST ADVISE. CHRISTOPHER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HELICOPTERS, AIR SEARCH & RESCUE, AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE055040
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JEBURGESS:ML
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780098-0367
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803108/aaaadnqj.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1a5f7bb8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 LIBREVILLE 519
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3121285
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DOWNED HELICOPTER
TAGS: EAIR, GB, US
To: LIBREVILLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1a5f7bb8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014